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## **John E. Reilly Sr. Bridge (South Market Street Bridge) Closing for 10 Weeks**

**Wilmington** — Beginning Monday, Feb. 7, the John E. Reilly Sr. (South Market St.) Bridge will be closed for approximately 10 weeks to complete infrastructure and technology upgrades, resulting in traffic detours and significant changes in DART bus routes and bus stops in that area.

Traffic will be rerouted down Fourth Street, over the Winchester Bridge (Fourth Street Bridge), on to South Heald Street, to A Street, connecting drivers back to Route 13. (*See accompanying detour route map.*) The South Market Street Bridge is over the Christina River. The project begins at the South Market Street intersection of Water and Shipley streets and ends at the south end of the bridge. Businesses near the bridge will remain open.

DART bus transit routes will be detoured to I-95 south and may result in travel delays on routes 16, 23, 30, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 54, 55 and 59. For these routes, the bus stop at South Market and Water streets will be closed, so riders may board at King and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets. Transit route 301 will also use the I-95 south detour.

DART bus routes 17, 22 and 25 will use Martin Luther King to Walnut Street and pick up passengers at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Walnut Bus Stop. The buses will then continue on Walnut Street and make a right on 4<sup>th</sup> and follow the official detour.

The four eastbound bus stops on A Street between Market and Heald streets will be closed. Riders of bus Route 17 to New Castle can board at South Heald and Townsend streets. Riders traveling to DuPont Highway, using bus route 22 or 25, can board at stops across the street on A Street.

To assist DART transit riders in the p.m. peak time period, there will be a "bus and right turn only" lane on King Street from 7<sup>th</sup> Street to 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

DelDOT will monitor detour conditions and the signal timing of surrounding streetlights. In addition, DelDOT will coordinate with the City of Wilmington and local law enforcement agencies.

An estimated 15,000 vehicles cross the bridge on an average day, and an estimated 2,000 DART passengers per day will be affected.

This temporary closure is part of a \$4.5 million bridge renovation project that began this past summer, but as of yet has not required a closure. The work on the Reilly Bridge involves replacement of the bascule machinery, electrical system and controls, installation of new bridge operating traffic gates and signals, replacing deteriorated connection rivets with high strength bolts, replacing deteriorated lateral bracing gusset plates,

installation of new bolted floorbeam bottom flange cover plates at all interior floorbeams, repairing or replacing broken handrail elements, strengthening the steel joists, live load support anchors bolts and retaining metal work, cleaning and painting the entire superstructure with a three coat system, repairing spalled substructure reinforced concrete, jacketing deteriorated operator house columns, replacing the approach roadway curb and sidewalk, milling and overlaying the approach roadway surface and other miscellaneous repairs.

Also, once the project is complete, the bridge will have new sidewalks, lighting, pedestrian railing, and the rehabilitation of the operators' house.

DelDOT must maintain the operation of the 208-foot long double-leaf bascule bridge because federal regulations require that the Christina River remain accessible to emergency vessels. Without the repairs, the bridge's mechanical systems are in danger of failing.

Built in 1927, and dedicated to former State Sen. John E. Reilly Sr. in 1983, the bridge is considered an historic structure and is one of three pre-1957 simple trunnion bascule highway bridges that remain operable in Delaware.

A bridge has spanned the Christina since around 1808. That first wooden "turn bridge" was in service until 1883 when the City of Wilmington replaced it with a metal truss swing span bridge. In 1927, The Delaware State Highway Department replaced the swing span with the current bridge. It was given a major rehabilitation in 1982.

Bus riders who need information about DART bus route detours call 1-800-652-DART or visit [www.DartFirstState.com](http://www.DartFirstState.com).

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